

10-25-1942

Letter from Yakima, Washington, October 25, 1942

Ralph Mouw

Follow this and additional works at: <https://nwcommons.nwciowa.edu/mouwletters1942>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Letters at NWCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in 1942 by an authorized administrator of NWCommons. For more information, please contact ggrond@nwciowa.edu.

Oct 25, 1942

Dear folks at home:

Here it is almost a week now since I left home and I'm not kidding when I say that was some week. I suppose you would like to hear all about my trip - of course I could write volumes but I'll condense it so you won't get too tired of reading it. Our first day of traveling was rather quiet and not much to see since we were traveling through Nebraska. Towards evening however we could notice we were getting towards the mountains since the ground kept on getting more hilly. Also each station had its elevation and that kept going up until a little on this side of Cheyenne we were a little over 7000 ft up in the mountains. We didn't get to see much of the Country from Cheyenne to Ogden, Utah since it was dark, but in the morning the sun rising over the Mountains really was something to see. At Salt Lake City I first thought it had snowed but then they turned out to be salt fields - something rather unusual I thought.

And then the great Salt Lake itself was very pretty since the mountains just reflected in the water. All through Utah we traveled along the mountains so you can imagine I really got a kick out of that. I didn't get to see much of Nevada since we were there again at night and then the next morning we were in California at day break. I got into Riverside at about 8 o'clock and began looking for my outfit but as you have undoubtedly heard I couldn't find them so I went to the M.P. Station and began asking the Capt if he knew their whereabouts. Well we telephoned up and down the California Coast trying to locate this outfit but we had no luck. At any rate while we were sitting in that office I experienced my first earthquake. It was a rather queer feeling, you can imagine, to be sitting in a chair when this large building began trembling and shaking - it only lasted for about 15-20 seconds at Riverside. California quakes most people for the first time with rain, but it quaked me with sunshine and an earthquake.

Naturally California is very pretty now. I got quite a thrill at seeing Palm trees and Oranges growing on trees and all such pretty things

but to continue my story I went down to
the Western Defense Sector Hq which happened
to be located at one of the swankiest Hotels
in all California namely the Huntington Hotel
at Pasadena. I had a Command Car take
me from Riverside to Pasadena and of course
that was very pretty, and it was such nice warm
weather. We rode past the Santa Anita Race track
which now has been turned over into a Concentration
camp for Japanese. To go on - at Pasadena
after a Conference with a few Colonels & Majors we
located this outfit at Yakima, Wash. So then
they wrote me up some new orders to come out here
Of course all this running around took money and
frankly I became quite financially embarrassed.
However they arranged through QM for government
transportation from Los Angeles to Yakima, so on
Wednesday evening I was in Los Angeles
heading north on the Southern Pacific. Of course
since we were in the black out zone all our
curtains were pulled down tightly. All day
Thursday we traveled in California - the Northern
part isn't nearly as pretty as the Southern part and
a good part of that is just plain farming country.

Towards evening Thursday we began getting into
to tall Pine Country and once again began going
up over the mountains into Oregon. We passed
over some pretty deep canyons and through
no less than 21 tunnels in crossing. Late Thursday
night we stopped high in the Mountains and then
in the Moonlight we saw Mount Chiesta one of the
highest mountains around there. On Friday
noon we crossed the Columbia River and found
ourselves in Washington of course this was
all Pine Country and we met many trains
loaded with Red Cedar headed for the mills.
and then I saw the Pacific at Puget Sound. For
a distance of about 60 miles our train ran
right along the Sound. At Tacoma Wash I saw the
super structure and huge cables of the Narrows Suspension
Bridge which was the 3rd largest in the World and as you
probably remember, was wrecked in a storm a year or 3 ago.
At Seattle we came past the large airplane
factory which builds the flying fortresses and since
it was getting late they were just sending up the
Barrage Balloons. Well I finally arrived here
on Saturday morning about 2 o'clock and then
I came on out to the firing center. This really
is some place we expect to be here for about
another month. Incidentally we are in the

dessert here and I do mean dessert. It certainly
does seem strange since only a few miles away
they grow the nicest apples but here its sand and
dusty just like powder. Its so deep that it goes
well over your shoes. From where I'm sitting
now on my canvas bunk in my little tent I can
see snow on the mountains and its nice here during
the day but we nearly freeze to death at night. I don't
have a stove in my tent so I thought I had better
get a sleeping bag right away to at least try to
keep warm. Believe me we really hot it here.
Work seven days a week while here at the firing
center but hope that will change when we leave here
in December.

I would home for some money since I won't get paid
until December and I need to get my baggage as
soon as it comes here. I send it back as soon as I get
paid.

I figured I traveled around 4000 miles last week possibly
more and all of that without getting in bed so you can
imagine I was a little tired last night when I went to
bed for the first time in a week.

Must close now - My address for the time being
is 1st Ralph J. Moraw, 2nd Bn 144th FA, Yakima, Wash.

P.S. Don't forget to send me
Angeline Via Mews Address.

I am
Ralph.